

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4810

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO, PINS

SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY: HIGH LEVEL CONSULTATIONS CONTINUE AS PRINCIPAL
CONTENDERS SEEKS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITIONS FOR ANTICIPATED
SHOWDOWN. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAS APPROVED A "GAME PLAN"
FOR THE FIFTH PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AND TAKEN ACTION ON
SEVERAL MATTERS DEALING WITH ECONOMY. THE FIFTH GOVERNMENT
HAS RECEIVED "EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT" FROM THREE MILITARY
GROUPS AND FROM THE FELLOW-TRAVELLING MDP/CDE. RUMORS OF AN
IMPENDING COUP ARE CIRCULATING. NO VIOLENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. HIGH LEVEL CONSULTATIONS: HIGH LEVEL CONSULTATIONS
CONTINUED THROUGHT AUGUST 21. AMONG THEM:
--COSTA GOMES MEETING WITH PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO, VASCO LOURENCO,
MELO ANTUNES AND, BRIEFLY, RAMIRO CORREIA. NO ANNOUNCEMENTS
WERE MADE.
--OTELO AND FABIAO MET WITH COMMANDERS OF CENTRAL MILITARY
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REGION IN COIMBRA. COPCON COMMUNIQUE INDICATED THAT DOCUMENT

SYNTHESIZING ANTUNES AND COPCON DOCUMENTS WAS DISCUSSED. OTELO
LATER FLEW TO SOUTHERN MILITARY REGION.

--THREE CHIEFS OF STAFF OF ARMED FORCES MET WITH SIGNERS OF
ANTUNES AND COPCON DOCUMENTS.

--GONCALVES MET WITH "LOYALIST" OFFICERS INCLUDING RAMIRO
CORREIA, CORVACHO, TOME, AND JUDAS.

2. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ACTS: COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON AUGUST 21
APPROVED 50-PAGE PROGRAM OUTLINING POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES OF FIFTH PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. DOCUMENT
UNDERLINED GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION TO BE GUIDED BY "UNITARY"
RATHER THAN PARTISAN CONSIDERATIONS IN ITS EFFORTS TO OVERCOME
CURRENT CRISIS AND CONSOLIDATE GAINS MADE SO FAR BY REVOLUTION.
COUNCIL ALSO APPROVED MEASURES ON SEVERAL ECONOMIC MATTERS
INCLUDING: PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN TYPES OF FEUDAL LAND
TENURE, AND SALARY ADJUSTMENTS DESIGNED TO HAVE WIDE POPULAR
APPEAL (RAISING WAGES FOR LOWEST PAID BY 44 PER CENT WHILE DROPPING
TOP-LEVEL GOVERNMENT SALARIES BY 15 PER CENT).

3. EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FOR PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT: THE
AFM SECRETARIAT FOR THE NAVY, NATIONAL SERGEANTS COMMISSION,
AND GROUP OF AIR FORCE SERGEANTS HAVE ALL RELEASED STATEMENTS
CALLING FOR SUPPORT OF FIFTH PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AS WAY OUT OF
PRESENT CRISIS. MDP/CDE ISSUED SIMILAR STATEMENT.

4. COUP RUMORS: HIGH-LEVEL CONSULTATIONS PROVIDED BACKDROP
FOR RASH OF RUMORS OF IMPENDING COUP D'ETAT. PCP ISSUED
COMMUNIQUE EVENING OF AUGUST 21 WARNING OF DANGER OF COUP AND
CALLING FOR POPULAR VIGILANCE. MES AND LCI CALLED ON MEMBERS
TO ASSEMBLE IN FACE OF THREAT. RUMORS WERE FUELED WHEN TROOPS
CONDUCTED TRAINING EXERCISE AT SITE OF RTP TELEVISION STATION
AND TEST OF COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES BETWEEN PRESIDENTIAL
PALACE AND RTP WAS REPORTED.

5. VIOLENCE: INCIDENTS REPORTED AUGUST 22 INCLUDED:
--IN BRAGA, BOMB EXPLODED IN PCP HEADQUARTERS.
--IN MADEIRA, FACILITIES OF EMISSORA NACIONAL REPORTEDLY
DESTROYED BY BLAST DURING EARLY MORNING HOURS.

6. COMMENT: OTELO AND FABIAO'S DISCUSSIONS OF NEW DOCUMENT
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WITH REGIONAL MILITARY COMMANDERS AND CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS
BETWEEN COSTA GOMES AND OFFICERS IDENTIFIED WITH ANTUNES AND
COPCON DOCUMENTS INDICATE ANTI-GONCALVES FORCES CONTINUE TO
TRY TO BUILD BROAD BASED SUPPORT WITHIN MILITARY FOR NEW
DOCUMENT. BURST OF ACTIVITY BY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
AND EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FROM SERGEANTS AND NAVY AFM
REPRESENTATIVES CLEARLY DESIGNED TO SHORE UP GONCALVES'
POSITION. INCREASE IN ALREADY HIGH RUMOR INDEX IS INDICATIVE

OF ATMOSPHERE OF NERVOUS ANTICIPATION HERE.
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